

MISSING PAGE

ORIGINAL DOCUMENT MISSING PAGE(S):

Tab 15

State Department review completed

14 AUG 1948

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GENERAL

1. Two Benelux leaders support firm western stand--Belgian Premier Spaak has expressed to US Ambassador Kirk his approval of the US handling of the Moscow negotiations. Spaak feels that the western powers hold two trump cards: the Ruhr and the West German Government; Spaak hopes that the West realizes the necessity of hanging on to these trumps. Spaak believes that penetration into control of the Ruhr is the major objective of Soviet diplomacy and that defeat or delay of the formation of a west German state is a close second.

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Kirk reports that Luxembourg Foreign Minister Bech has expressed a similar view of Soviet objectives. Bech advises the western powers to be cautious and not let considerations of prestige in Berlin or compassion toward the Berliners to lead them to make even slight concessions on the Ruhr or a west German state in order to obtain a temporarily easing of tension. Bech's view is that "continued Allied firmness" will eventually result in a shifting of Soviet pressure toward a different weak point, probably eastward.

2. US expresses its position on colonial question to Italy--The Department of State has informed the Italian Government that after consideration of Italian views as to the disposition of former Italian colonies and in recognition of the importance which the Italian people attach to this question, the US is now prepared to take a final decision only as regards Italian Somaliland and the southern portion of Eritrea. The US will support Italian trusteeship for Italian Somaliland and will support the cession of southern Eritrea to Ethiopia. Because of the complex factors involved in the disposition of Northern Eritrea and Tripolitania, the US has concluded that decision on these colonies should be postponed to permit further study by the UN. In the case of Cyrenaica, the US feels obliged to respect the British pledge to the Senussi and to support the UK in carrying out this pledge.

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NEAR EAST-AFRICA

3. PALESTINE: Immediate aid urged for Arab refugees--US Consul General Macdonald in Jerusalem expresses the opinion that the Palestine Arab refugees currently constitute the most important political question in Arab Palestine; he considers immediate action to alleviate their plight essential. Macdonald says that the UN and the US are widely blamed for the situation. He suggests that effective assistance would be the best means of demonstrating continued US friendship for the Arabs and would also tend to arrest the deterioration of the US position in the Middle East.

THE AMERICAS

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4. NICARAGUA: Invasion by revolutionaries - [redacted] a band of guerilla-revolutionaries, "apparently" armed by plane from Guatemala, have crossed the Honduran frontier into Nicaragua and sacked a nearby town. General Somoza of Nicaragua has already flown reinforcements to the area and believes the invasion "can easily be contained."

(CIA Comment: CIA concurs with General Somoza's estimate. However, the Presidents of the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Honduras--the "dictator" countries--on the one side and Cuba, Haiti, Venezuela, Costa Rica and Guatemala on the other are informally committed to support one another in the event of revolutionary attack. The invasion will further embitter the relations between these opposing groups. In the unlikely event that it touches off a formal conflict, with Guatemala and Nicaragua as the principal contestants, the superior air strength of the "dictator" countries will be a decisive factor.)

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